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# THE AMERICAN JOURNAL OF NURSING

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## EDITORIAL COMMENT

### A JOURNAL MILESTONE

With this issue, the JOURNAL begins its seventeenth year. The one just closed has been in many ways the most successful in its history. This is due partly to its natural growth, which has made possible a more liberal policy, and partly to a campaign for new subscribers carried on from the headquarters at Rochester in which many nurses in every section of the country have participated. Our acknowledgments are hereby made to all those who have taken part in this campaign or who have in any way aided in the development of the JOURNAL. We ask the continued coöperation of nurses in every department of work in its behalf.

By those who are working in its interest, it is to be remembered that the idea to be brought forward is that the AMERICAN JOURNAL OF NURSING is first of all the property of the American Nurses' Association with its 30,000 members, that its managers and editors are nurses, leaders in the nursing field, that all of its contributors are either nurses of experience or physicians of note, that no individual profits by its financial success, and that its motive is the advancement of nursing education and ideals, that the public may have better care both in the prevention and relief of sickness and that the worker may be given such recognition as the character of her calling deserves.

Notwithstanding the troubled condition of the warring countries of Europe at the present time, the interests of the JOURNAL have not been materially disturbed. The year opens with every indication that conditions in our own country will remain undisturbed and that we may look forward to a long period of quiet steady effort in the interest, not only of the JOURNAL, but of all our nursing affairs. There is no one special new problem looming up before us, but there are many of the old ones which are unfinished and must be carried forward.

The Robb Memorial, the first of our funds to be established, made a perceptible gain last year, as a result of the special campaign, but the amount set as its goal has not yet been reached.

The Relief Fund, while growing steadily, is far from adequate to meet the requests for help which are constantly increasing.

The reorganization of the American Nurses' Association is the most vital of the old problems that are immediately before us. Many of our readers will be interested in the bill which has been introduced into Congress for the incorporation of the Association in the District of Columbia, a bill which has passed the Senate and which will be introduced in the House at its next session. The text is given on another page.

We want to add the JOURNAL's voice to that of those who have the actual work in hand, urging all associations, large and small, to give very careful consideration to the changes in the by-laws of the national association, a summary of which was sent to the affiliated organizations earlier in the summer and which should have their attention at this time.

Undoubtedly, in many states, plans will be getting under way for changes in the laws for state registration, for amendments which will raise the required standards or will in some way broaden the influence of the laws, and in this work, again, a strong pull together is the thing that carries such work forward.

The leaders in all of the strictly educational departments of our work need the inspiration which comes from the support of the great rank and file, which an individual can give by her presence, if she can do no more, at the meetings in her locality.

#### THE RELIEF FUND

We have been asked to make special mention at this time of the Relief Fund of the American Nurses' Association. Among some groups there is still some misunderstanding as to its purpose and the manner of its administration. If the American Nurses' Association succeeds in obtaining a national charter from Congress, it can continue to hold this Fund as one of its activities without having it separately incorporated or being in any way hampered in its administration by state restrictions.

The suggestion which was made last spring, that the name should be changed and that the Fund should stand as a memorial to Isabel McIsaac, was referred back to the associations and is one of the points to be discussed at the next convention. As a member of the committee which helped to develop the Fund, the editor is opposed to this change. She feels that it would lead to great confusion. It seems more appro-

priate that the Relief Fund, which is intended to relieve those of our members who are in other ways unprovided for when misfortune overtakes them, should stand for that one thing and not in any way serve a double purpose. She feels that Miss McIsaac herself would disapprove of it and also that a memorial to her of any kind should be a spontaneous expression of affection from her friends, from those who feel that they owe much to her teachings or who admired her womanly qualities.

At the state meetings which are now being held all over the country, those in charge should remember to appoint a Relief Fund Committee, as one of the latest developments in connection with this Fund is the provision for these state committees through which applications for relief may be sent to the central committee and to which it can turn for help in any needed investigation of applications. The state committees are asked to supervise the formation of local Relief Fund committees which shall bear much the same relation to them as the state committees do to the national. All the committees, national, state and local, have one common duty, that of increasing the Fund by means of organization or individual pledges.

#### THE SLIDING SCALE OF CHARGES

Another old problem, which has been mentioned in this JOURNAL more frequently in the years gone by than recently, is the sliding scale of charges for nurses. Miss Parsons, in her recently published volume, has embodied her opinions which coincide with ours, that before a departure from the fixed rate can be brought about, there must be a long period of education of the pupils in training. It is an injustice to the woman of long years of successful experience that her earning power should be no more than is that of a young woman fresh from the training school. It is also unfair that if she were to give her services to a person of limited means at a reduced charge, she should not be considered justified in raising her charges to a patient of great wealth, as do physicians.

On the other hand, with such great numbers of young women entering the field without experience of the world and, in many cases, without adequate home training, whose youth prevents their having reached the period of responsibility, the amount demanded for their services from people in any walk of life is unreasonable. The woman who is able to do routine work in the training school, under supervision, but whose lack of culture interferes with her adaptability outside, and whose inability to be generally useful leaves her with many hours of idleness, is not worth to her employer what he would cheerfully pay to

a woman of trained experience and of broader knowledge. One thing we believe should be done is that the central directory committees, who are constantly dealing with nurses who are unsuccessful, whose names are constantly on the waiting list, until they are really in straightened circumstances, should advise these that their only hope lies in reducing their charges, that in doing so they are not in any way disloyal to their associates or to any other members of their directory.

The breaking down of the fixed charge and the establishment of the custom of increasing it as well as decreasing it, is one of the most difficult problems that has presented itself to the nursing body.

#### THE NEED OF INSTRUCTORS

One of the great perplexities which is being felt at Teachers College and by the heads of the leading schools all over the country is the impossibility of filling the demand for trained instructors of nurse students. Hospitals are offering from \$65 to \$100 a month, with maintenance, to women of experience who have had special training, and they are feeling indignant that such demands cannot be met satisfactorily. There is a reason for this which reflects back on the very hospitals which are most critical. They are demanding teachers possessing the qualifications of the most highly trained person, yet they have not felt the responsibility of turning their own promising pupils toward such preparation by urging them to take the special courses which are provided for them. Teachers College and the universities most closely affiliated with good nursing schools are training larger numbers of women each year but they cannot begin to meet the demand; they cannot make bricks without straw. Many schools and a few alumnae associations are offering scholarships for postgraduate courses but many more should follow their example. The applications for the Robb scholarships are fewer than one would suppose. Four of these scholarships are granted this year and possibly more may be given another year; there should be keen competition for them from all parts of the country. It would be well to announce at the various state meetings that such scholarships are available. When a superintendent has struggled hard to persuade her board that she needs an instructor, it is hard to tell her that there is no one available who has been specially trained for the work. The women who have been teachers before taking up nursing should prove of great use as instructors in our training schools if only they will fit themselves for it.

## "THE CANADIAN NURSE"

Many of the nurses in this country, especially the Canadian women, will be interested in the change of ownership of *The Canadian Nurse* which was taken over by the Canadian National Association of Trained Nurses at its convention in Winnipeg in June last. The new editor of the magazine is Helen Randall, superintendent of nurses at the Vancouver General Hospital and president of the Canadian Society of Superintendents. She is a graduate of the Royal Victoria, Montreal, and has held several positions in this country. The retiring editor is Bella Crosby of Toronto.

It is to be remembered that *The Canadian Nurse*, which was established in 1905, has been developed under great hardship, much valuable work having been given to it voluntarily by many members. Miss Crosby has performed her duties as editor in addition to her regular nursing work and with small remuneration. We congratulate her upon her release from the burden which she has been carrying for so long, and for the good pioneer work she has done in the face of such difficulties and problems as only those who have travelled the same road can appreciate. We congratulate the National Association on its ability to take this advance step and we wish the new editor every success in her undertaking.

## JOURNAL ADVERTISING

Every one, nowadays, realizes the value of advertising. Every one who has to do with a journal of any sort knows that the advertisements form one of its important features. This JOURNAL makes a steady effort to improve its advertising pages, to keep them up to the best ethical standards, to eliminate everything that is unreliable or that savors of quackery. The income from our advertising is one of the large parts of the JOURNAL's resources and it is perfectly legitimate to ask our readers to help us keep the best advertising in our pages, that when they need some hospital appliance or sick room necessity, they may feel perfect confidence in turning to those pages for what they are seeking.

How can you help us in this department? First, by always mentioning the JOURNAL when writing to advertisers. If these men receive many inquiries and orders from JOURNAL subscribers, they know it pays to keep their wares before them. Second, when you know of an excellent article which is not advertised with us, write to the manufacturers and ask them to take space with us. If you are present at any

convention where there are commercial exhibits, make the JOURNAL known to the people in charge. A word of commendation from one of our readers will go farther than many words from a JOURNAL representative, because it is spontaneous and disinterested. Finally, get into the habit of looking through the advertising pages; it is like stopping before the attractive window of a shop, you may see something that you had not known about and that would be of great value to you.

#### TWO IMPORTANT CHANGES

In the last issue of the JOURNAL we announced Miss Noyes' resignation from Bellevue, in order to accept a position with the Red Cross in Washington. Just as we go to press, we learn that her successor at Bellevue is to be Amy M. Hilliard, Inspector of Nurse Training Schools for New York State. The position of inspector, thus left vacant, is to be filled by civil service examination, as has been done in the past. The definite announcement of this examination will be found on another page. Miss Hilliard has filled this responsible position with exceptional ability; her resignation will cause deep regret among all with whom her work brought her in contact. It is hoped that the result of the examination may be an inspector who may follow her as successfully as she has followed Miss Goodrich.